

INFORMATION for all persons of good will toward Almighty God. RELIGION is a snare and a racket. GOD'S TRUTH shields and strengthens the upright.

KINGDOM NEWS

... the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, ... of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end ... The zeal of JEHOVAH of hosts will perform this.—Isalah 9:6,7.

DEVOTED to the principles of justice, truth, equity and kindness as exemplified in the acts and sayings of The Creator of the Universe and of His King Christ Jesus.

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CAN RELIGION SAVE THE WORLD FROM DISASTER?

These days are perilous, and concerning which Jesus says: 'Men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after the things coming upon the earth.' (Luke 21:26) The Devil is the enemy of all men who try to do right. The Devil sets snares in which the unsuspecting persons are caught. It is written: "The fear of man bringeth a snare; but whoso putteth his trust in the Lord shall be safe."—Proverbs 29:25.

Recently persons have carried about banners bearing these words: "Religion is a snare." Is religion a snare of the Devil? The Word of Almighty God answers. To His people God gives this warning: "Neither shalt thou serve their [religious] gods; for that will be a snare unto thee." (Deuteronomy 7:4-16) See also Judges 2:2,3; Psalm 106:36. If religion is a snare, then the exhibiting of banners, as above stated, is a friendly warning to the people.

"Christianity" means to follow the lead of Jesus Christ in obeying the Word of Almighty God, which is given to man as his true, safe guide. (Psalm 119:105; 2 Timothy 3:16,17) Christianity is not a religion James 1:26,27: "And if any one thinketh that he worshippeth God, and doth not restrain his tongue, but his heart deceiveth him; his worship is vain. For the worship that is pure and holy before God the Father, is this: to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and that one keep himself unspotted from the world."—Murdock's Syriac translation.

ENSNARED

Economic conditions that have come in the past few years have brought great fear upon the commercial men of the world. They fear that they cannot hold the power over men which commerce has given them. More recently their fear has increased by reason of the activities of the radical element, which threaten to destroy commerce and profiteering in the land. Dictatorial rule in many of the nations has put fear in the hearts of the people of every nation, and they are looking for some way to safeguard their interests. Satan has taken advantage of his own wickedness and through his earthly agents is ensnaring sincere persons.

That fear of men or what men might bring to pass has led the commercial men right into the snare of the Devil, and their words now fully admit that fact. For the first time in the history of America commercial men insist that only religion can save the nation from disaster. In August, 1939, the Chamber of Commerce of the State of New York released to the public their report, and the following is quoted from that report, to wit:

"At this time the state and nation find themselves in different conditions and with different needs from those which our country has ever heretofore known, and our educational system must be adjusted to meet these present-day needs. This committee is convinced that the great lack

in our homes and in our national life, is the lack of true, simple religion. ... If this nation does not maintain its religious foundation, its whole structure will fall.

"When we say religious, we do not mean any particular church or sect. We do not want church differences mixed up in our schools; but we do want our scholars to appreciate and understand the importance of their following and making the most of the faith with which they are identified. We want them to know and to live by the basic rules of life which each will find in his own religion. Integrity, kindly human understanding and true morals are found in each, and those our scholars must know and follow all through their lives if they would build high characters and play the part we need them to play in the future of this nation.

"The United States cannot have or maintain a right system unless it is based on true religious principles, and, therefore, in spite of the fact that some hesitate to include religion in our educational program, we place it first."

GOD AND BIBLE IGNORED

If that committee had advised the study of the Bible, and the faithful service of Jehovah God, and Christ Jesus, it would have done well. Contrary thereto the report completely ignores the Bible and no mention is made of Jehovah God or Christ Jesus. Religion alone is stressed as the savior of the nation.

There are more than 200 religions practiced in America, and not one of those religions teaches or advocates God's announced remedy for the ill effects upon the peoples of earth. Many of the religions are under the direct control of demons and honor the Devil himself openly. In fact, all religion is based upon the worship of demons or things pertaining to demons. In the face of the plain statement to this effect in the Bible, the aforesaid committee reports that religion is the hope of the nation. The Roman Catholic Hierarchical religious institution takes the lead in religious matters, and yet that institution has

been diligent to keep the people in ignorance of the Bible, and that institution also continuously persecutes those who teach the Bible to the people. The Hierarchy publishes the fact that its principal doctrines are based upon the traditions of men and not upon the Scriptures. That institution has been in operation for more than 1500 years and it has completely failed to instill in the people integrity and morality; and this every honest and sincere person knows. Adolf Hitler is a Catholic and a practitioner of religion, and his regime for several years has had the support of the Roman Catholic religious institution. It is well known that Hitler constantly consults the wicked spirits, and certainly Hitler and his religion are not teaching and cannot teach the youth morality, integrity, or even common decency.

PERSECUTION

Religion has always been the institution of persecution and crime. Jesus Christ was crucified by religionists, and all His disciples suffered persecution at the hands of religionists, and His true followers today likewise are persecuted.

The early settlers of America fled Europe because of religious persecution and settled in America, where they might worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience. The men who founded the United States government embodied in the fundamental law the provision guaranteeing the freedom of worship. The Roman Catholic religious institution has always fought against that part of the American Constitution. When Christians assemble peaceably to teach the Bible, and to worship God in spirit and in truth, the religionists of the Hierarchy make a desperate attempt to break up such a meeting of Christians and to prevent the study and teaching of the Bible. That kind of religion could never instill in the minds of American youth integrity, morality or respect for the law.

The report of the aforesaid committee of the Chamber of Commerce discloses that the members of that committee are either ignorant of the Bible or purposely ignoring it, and for the Bible teachings they substitute religion. The Bible is the Word of Almighty God and is absolutely opposed to religion, assigning as the reason therefor that religion originated with the Devil. Christianity means to obey God's command, as set forth in the Bible. The Bible contains the word of God, and concerning it the Christian, Christ Jesus, said: "Thy word is truth." (John 17:17) It is by the Word of God that the right principles of honesty, integrity and morality can be taught. The Bible is the only safe guide for man: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105) It was written and given to man that those who love righteousness might be guided in the right way and

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learn true morality, honesty, and integrity, and that they might worship Jehovah in spirit and in truth.

The clergymen, who are the religious leaders, have not taught the people to have proper respect for the Word of God. They have substituted the teachings of men for that which is contained in the Bible, God's Word. The Lord Jesus Christ instructs all His followers to pray to Jehovah God: 'Thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as in heaven.' (Matthew 6:10) There is no religious institution or organization in America that teaches the people that God's kingdom is the only hope of the human race. The committee of the Chamber of Commerce now urges the people to choose ANY kind of religion and teach it, and ignores the Bible. The word of God, as set forth in the Bible, makes it clear that religion is a snare of Satan and his associated demons. (Deuteronomy 7:16) Jesus emphasizes the fact that religion is of the Devil. (Matthew 15:1-9; John 8:42-44) The apostle Paul likewise denounced religion. (Galatians 1:1-16; Acts 26:3-20) The apostle makes known how God rescued him from religion, the Devil's snare. He told the Athenians, who were practicing religion, that they were in fact worshipping demons: "Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." (Acts 17:22) Note other translations of this same text: "Men of Athens, I perceive that you are in every respect remarkably religious." (*Weymouth translation*) "Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said, Athenians, I perceive that in all things you are extremely devoted to the worship of demons." (*Emphatic Diaglott*) "Ye men of Athens! in every way, how unusually reverent of the demons ye are, I perceive."—*Rotherham translation*.

Do the good people of America, who believe in honesty, integrity, and morality, desire to have their children taught religion, which is the worship of Satan and other demons, and which is against God and His kingdom by Christ Jesus? Is the committee aforementioned wholly ignorant of the teachings of God's Word, or have they willingly ignored God's Word to draw the people into the snare of the Devil?

RELIGION COMMERCIALIZED

From the beginning of America this was considered a Christian nation. The Supreme Court of the United States long ago so held. Now it appears that the clergymen, or religious leaders, have turned the people away from God and Christ, and

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have substituted religion entirely for the Scriptures. The clergymen, fearing that by preaching Christ and Him crucified they might not receive the honor which they desired, adopted religion instead of Christianity. They soon induced themselves to believe and led others to believe that religion and Christianity are the same thing; yet the Bible shows that religion is directly opposed to Christianity. The clergymen, desiring to increase their own power and influence and to enlarge their fields, solicited political and commercial men to join their institutions, and as an inducement they have made commercial men the chief ones in their flocks. The commercial men were induced to embrace religion; and they feared to refuse to support it, because it might militate against their interest to do so. The clergymen and the principal of their flock, the political and commercial members, even as God foretold through His prophet, draw near to the Lord only by the words of their mouth, while their hearts are far removed from Him; and thus they are caught in the snare of religion. (Isaiah 29:10-13) The love of money and the power that money would bring was an added inducement for the commercial men to embrace religion and to associate themselves with the clergymen. In this connection mark the words written in the Bible relating to such: "But they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."—1 Timothy 6:9, 10.

It was an easy matter for men representing the commercial interests to be led into the religious snare. It is manifest that if they ever knew anything about the Word of God they have turned away from it, as the Scriptures further state concerning the charge, which the apostle gave to Timothy: "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy."—1 Timothy 6:17.

Mark this: that the report of the Chamber of Commerce committee aforesaid has completely ignored God and His Bible.

Now in this hour of stress upon the world, when all men aside from Christians are filled with fear, the Chamber of Commerce by its committee urges upon the people that they teach in their schools ANY kind of religion. Thus it is seen that the Devil is leading the nation into his snare.

WILL IT SAVE?

Will the teaching of religion save the nation? Far from it! There is one God Almighty, whose name is Jehovah. He is the Creator of heaven and earth, and He alone is the fountain of life. (Psalms 24:1; 36:9) He gives special warning to those who pretend to serve Him and who forget God and turn away from Him, and His warning is couched in these plain words: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalm 9:17) If the advice of the Chamber of Commerce committee is followed the whole nation will be taught to forget God and His Word.

RACKET

Religion serves as a means of carrying on a racket for this reason: that religion is false and defames the name of Almighty God and Christ Jesus. The clergy put fear into the minds of sincere persons and thereby induce them to embrace religion. The clergy teach to such people the doctrine of "purgatory", which is absolutely false. They teach that the dead are in "purga-

tory" suffering conscious punishment and that by the prayers of priests, who receive money for uttering such prayers, the 'punishment of those in purgatory' can be shortened. Such is not only a false doctrine, but a wicked defamation of God's name and Word. Such doctrine makes God a party to a lie by claiming that He hears and answers the prayers of men who receive money for uttering them. This is the most subtle and wicked racket that could be carried on, because it is a means of obtaining the people's money by false representation. Therefore it is absolutely and Scripturally true that "religion is a snare and a racket".

Let the people keep in mind that Jesus Christ emphasized the importance of God's kingdom as the only hope of humankind. There is no other hope. The people must now choose between the instruction given in the Bible and the advice given by religionists. Instead of religion's planting any hope in the minds of men, and making any provision for their salvation, exactly the contrary is the result.

Jehovah God plainly directs the people to the only means of salvation and the only thing in which they can hope, and in the Bible He says: "Behold, my servant [Christ Jesus] whom I have chosen; my beloved in whom my soul is well pleased; I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall declare judgment to the nations. And in his name shall the nations hope."—Matthew 12:18, 21, *Revised Version*.

The report of the committee of the Chamber of Commerce discloses the fact that the members thereof are victims of the snare. They are blind to the Word of God and are following their blind leaders, the clergymen of the religious institutions; and concerning this the Lord Jesus, directing His advice to the multitude, said that they should avoid the blind clergymen; 'for the blind lead the blind, and both shall fall into the ditch.'—Matthew 15:14.

The Lord is now judging the nations, separating the "sheep" (Christians) from the "goats" (religionists). (Matthew 25:31-46) At the end of that judgment every person will be found either in the "sheep" or in the "goat" class.

The American people, as well as the people of other nations, must now make their choice between religion and the kingdom of God by Christ Jesus. Instead of following religion, which leads into the snare of the Devil, let the people devote themselves to Christianity, which means learning and obeying the Word of God and worshipping Almighty God in spirit and in truth.

To further assist you to make the right choice you may arrange with the WATCHTOWER to hear the short speech "Snare and Racket" reproduced for you free.

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